

Students get Halo effect of nursing

Health and Life-skills Outreach (Halo) programme promotes nursing as a career

✔ HUANGRUNCHEN

Mr Koh Wei Shao, 26, was a medical student in the US when he suddenly decided to be a nurse.

He felt he wanted to interact more with patients to better help with their problems.

Mr Koh told *The New Paper*: “I feel that nursing takes a more holistic view of patient care.

“Doctors might be more qualified to diagnose disease, but nurses take time to care for the patient’s psycho-social needs.”

Now a Year 3 nursing student at the National University of Singapore (NUS), Mr Koh is involved in the Health and Life-skills Outreach (Halo) programme organised by the Ministry of Health to promote nursing as a career.

Held at the NUS Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies till May 25, the Halo programme is reaching out to 500 students from 16 secondary schools and junior colleges. The programme consists of game stations that simulate real-life patient care, teaching students how to clean a wound on a mannequin and how to tie a sling.

Irfan Mirzan, 14, a Secondary 2 student from Victoria School, said: “At this age, we get a lot of questions like ‘what do you want to do in the future’. I could



Ms Julienne Reblora teaching the students from Victoria School at one of the exhibition stations. TNP PHOTOS: SYAMIL SAPARI

get a sense of what they do in nursing here and see if I have an interest in it.”

Ethan Dhiren Divyanathan, his classmate, agreed: “I have an uncle who is a nurse, and I think the work he does is amazing. He helps a lot of people, and he can deal with blood and wounds.”

Mr Koh, who is one of the few male nurses in the NUS nursing course, is glad that boys are encouraged to take up nursing.

He said: “When I took up nurs-

ing, I didn’t think too much of it as a ‘feminine profession’, I just went for what I was passionate in.”

His coursemate, Ms Julienne Reblora, 25, agreed.

She said: “It is good that secondary school boys are being exposed to nursing early. Then they can better appreciate the kind of roles nurses play and maybe take it up as a career.”

Ms Lim Fui Ping, senior lecturer at NUS Nursing, was glad



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– Mr Koh Wei Shao (above), who gave up medicine for nursing

that nursing was becoming more popular among school-leavers.

She said: “Degree nursing will gain importance in Singapore. The increasingly complex healthcare setting will require nurses to have higher-order critical thinking and clinical judgment competencies in addition to proficiency in delivering nursing care.”

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